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MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

NOTIFICATION

MERCHANT SHIPPING

New Delhi, the 16th July 1951

S.R.O. 1077.—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 26A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923 (XXI of 1923) the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:

1. **Title.**—(1) These Rules shall be called the Indian Merchant Shipping (Medical Examination) Rules, 1951.

(2) They shall come into force at once.

2. **Scope.**—The provisions of sub-section (1) of section 26A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923 shall not apply to seamen while serving on home trade ships.

3. **Arrangements to be made by the Central Govt.**—(1) The Central Government may appoint as many medical officers (hereinafter referred to as the "Medical Authority") as may be considered necessary at each of the ports of Calcutta, Bombay or any other port for the medical examination of seamen from time to time. The certificates to be issued shall be in the form given in Annexure B to the Rules.

(2) The Medical Authority examining a seaman shall be the prescribed authority for the purposes of sub-section (1) of section 26A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act.

4. **Standards of physical fitness.**—The standard of physical fitness of different classes of seamen shall be as set out in Annexure A of these rules (hereinafter referred to as the "prescribed standards").

5. **Application for Examination.**—Every seaman in possession of a continuous discharge certificate issued by a Shipping Office in India which is valid at an Indian Port, and desiring employment at sea shall apply to the Shipping Master at one of the Ports where arrangements exist for the medical examination.

6. **Registration.**—On receipt of an application for medical examination of a seaman, the Shipping Master, after satisfying himself that the seaman possesses a valid continuous discharge certificate, shall cause the particulars of the seaman to be posted in a register and shall fix a date, time and place for such medical examination and inform the applicant accordingly. He shall also transmit to the Medical Authority at the Port a request for the medical examination of such seaman giving his name and necessary particulars.

7. **Seamen to appear with Discharge Certificates.**—(a) Every seaman thus notified shall present himself and produce his continuous discharge certificate at the notified time and place for medical examination and at such subsequent dates and times when he may be required for this purpose.

(b) If a seaman fails to appear for the medical examination, without any valid grounds, in response to three consecutive calls from the Shipping Master, the latter may, after recording his reasons in writing, debar the seaman from appearing, for the medical examination for a period not exceeding six months.

8. *Nature of medical examination.*—Every seaman appearing for medical examination shall be subjected by the Medical Authority to such tests as may be considered necessary for determining his physical fitness in accordance with the prescribed standards.

9. *Record of medical examination conducted.*—The Medical Authority shall maintain a full record of the medical examinations conducted by him with copies of certificates of physical fitness issued to seamen and shall render weekly returns to the Shipping Master showing the result of the medical examination in respect of every seaman examined during that week.

10. *Certificate of physical fitness.*—(a) On completion of medical examination the Medical Authority shall issue to every seaman satisfying the prescribed standards a certificate of physical fitness in the form set out in Annexure B to these rules.

(b) In the event of a seaman failing to satisfy the prescribed standards due to any temporary defect which, in the opinion of the Medical Authority, is likely to be cured after treatment, the Medical Authority shall issue to the seaman a certificate with the remarks "temporarily unfit" indicating generally, where possible, the reasons for such unfitness and with the remark that the seaman should come for re-examination after the cause of his temporary unfitness is removed.

(c) A seaman not satisfying the prescribed standards of physical fitness and found to be suffering from a physical defect which, in the opinion of the Medical Authority examining him, renders him permanently unfit for sea service, shall be given a certificate of "permanent unfitness".

11. *Validity.*—The certificates of physical fitness issued by the Medical Authority shall be valid for a period of two years from the date of issue provided that a seaman holding a valid certificate may be engaged for voyage of any permissible duration if the unexpired period of validity of his certificate of fitness on the date of signing on is not less than six months.

12. *Entry in the continuous Discharge Certificate.*—The Shipping Master shall maintain a register showing the names of all seamen who have been medically examined along with the result of that medical examination and shall enter in the continuous discharge certificates of seamen medically examined the roster number of their medical examination.

13. *Appeal.*—(a) The Central Government shall set up an authority to be known as "The Medical Appeal Board for Seaman" (hereinafter to be called The "Appeal Board") consisting of at least two doctors not connected with any shipowner or with any organisation of shipowners or seafarers, to consider appeals of seamen who fail to get certificates of physical fitness for sea service at each of the ports where arrangements for medical examination of seamen exist.

(b) A seaman may submit an appeal for a review of his case to the Appeal Board through the Shipping Master of the Port at which he was medically examined.

(c) On preferring an appeal the seaman shall send along with his application a fee of Rs. 5.

(d) On receipt of the appeal accompanied by the fee the Shipping Master shall refer it to the Appeal Board and thereafter inform the seaman of the time and place of his examination by the Board.

(e) The decision of the Appeal Board shall be final.

14. *Exemption.*—Notwithstanding anything contained in these rules the Shipping Master may allow a seaman not in possession of a certificate of physical fitness to be engaged on board any ship for one voyage if, owing to shortage of time or other special reasons to be recorded in writing, he is satisfied that it is not possible for the seaman to appear for the medical examination. In such cases he shall cause to be endorsed on the continuous discharge certificate that the seaman has been exempted from the medical examination for one voyage only. No seaman may be exempted for a second voyage under the provisions of this rule, under any circumstances.

15. *Fees*.—(1). The cost of the arrangements made by the Government for the medical examination of seamen may be recovered by the levy of a fee on all shipping companies engaging (i) seamen in possession of certificates of physical fitness issued under these rules and (ii) seamen exempted in accordance with the provisions of these rules.

(2) The fee shall be Re. 1 per seaman engaged by a Shipping company and shall be recovered by the Shipping Master at the time of each engagement of the seamen.

(3) The fee so realized shall be credited to Government account by the Shipping Master.

16. *Duplicate or reissue of a certificate*.—A fee of Rs. 2 shall be charged from a seaman for the issue of a duplicate certificate of physical fitness when the original is torn or lost through his own fault.

ANNEXURE "A"

Vide Rule 4

MEDICAL STANDARDS OF FITNESS

(1) The candidate should be free from evidence of any contagious infectious disease. He should not be suffering from any disease which is likely to be aggravated by Sea Service or is likely to render him unfit for sea service or to endanger the health of the public. He should also be free from evidence of tuberculosis in any form. Physique in each case should be judged with due regard to the nature of the duties to be performed.

(2) The maximum age limit shall be 60 years.

(3) *Eyes—Standards of Vision*:—Visual acuity for Engine Room, Saloon, Bhandaries, Topasses, Barbers and Carpenters should be 6/12 in one eye and 6/24 in the other eye or 6/18 in each eye. With binocular Vision it may be 6/12 (two letters)—with or without glasses.

All Deck Ratings excepting Winchmen, Bhandaries, Cassabs, Topasses, Barbers and Carpenters must have normal colour Vision.

In the case of the following categories of seamen, Visual acuity should be as indicated below:—

Deck serangs	} 6/9 in each eye with or without glasses
Quartermasters	.	.	.	.
Tindals	.	.	.	.
Cassabs.	.	.	.	.

The other categories of Deck Crew must have 6/9 in each eye without glasses.

New entrants with vision in one eye only should be rejected.

(4) *Ears*.—The hearing must be good and there should be no sign of suppurative disease.

(5) *The Skin*.—There should be no evidence of acute or chronic skin disease or chronic ulceration.

(6) *The Alimentary System*.—1. In the case of Serangs and Tindals speech should be without impediment.

2. The candidate should have sufficient number of natural and/or artificial teeth for mastication.

3. Spleen enlargement should not exceed two fingers below costal margin and there should be no evidence of tenderness.

4. The liver may be slightly palpable but with no evidence of tenderness.

5. There should be no evidence of gross oral sepsis.

6. Candidates should not be suffering from diabetes. All cases of glycosuria should be fully investigated.

7. Candidates suffering from internal haemorrhoids should be temporarily rejected.

(7) *The Cardio-Vascular System.*—1. The Blood Pressure should be as shown below:—

Systolic—in principle 100+age; readings in excess without any evidence of kidney disease may be accepted. Maximum diastolic—100 mm of Hg. Blood Pressure+Systolic—Excess allowance over 100+age up to 35 years Maximum—150 mm of Hg. (to be reviewed after 6 months). Above 35 years maximum—170 mm of Hg. (to be reviewed after 6 months).

2. There should be no sign of gross arteriosclerosis.

3. There should be no evidence of enlargement of heart or chronic heart disease.

4. There should be no evidence of chronic valvular disease of the heart.

5. Candidates suffering from varicose veins in a marked degree should be temporarily rejected.

6. Cases of Arrhythmias—except sinus arrhythmia—should be investigated, and the candidates should be temporarily rejected.

(8) *The Respiratory System.*—The candidates should be free from any bronchial or laryngeal disease or deformity of chest. Lungs should be sound.

(9) *The Genito-Urinary System.*—1. There should be no evidence of kidney disease. Cases of albuminuria should be rejected temporarily pending full investigations.

2. Candidates suffering from hydrocele with longitudinal axis in excess of 3" should be temporarily rejected.

(10) *The Skeletal System.*—1. The function of all limbs should be within normal limits.

2. There should be no evidence of serious deformity of the spinal column.

(11) *The Nervous System.*—1. There should be no evidence of paresis or paralysis. However candidates suffering from mild paresis of the lower root of the facial nerve may be accepted.

2. There should be no evidence of any specific disease.

3. There should be no evidence of gross atrophy of muscles.

(12) *The Glandular System.*—There should be no evidence of tuberculous or specific disease of the glands.

(13) *Venereal Diseases.*—There should be no evidence of infectious venereal disease.

(14) *Special Standards for certain Ratings.*—The Medical Authority in consultation with the Shipping Master is authorised to relax the enforcement of the above standards of fitness in cases of seamen who (i) have a minimum of eight previous voyages to their credit and have earned good reports on their work (ii) are physically fit to perform their assigned duties on board satisfactorily and are constitutionally fit but may have some physical defects e.g., loss of 3 fingers or loss of thumb, etc., if such defects are not likely to interfere with their working efficiency.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

CERTIFICATE OF PHYSICAL FITNESS

(Vide Rule 3 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Medical Examination Rules, 1951).

Name:

Father's Name:

Age:

Race or Caste:

Address: (Local)

(Permanent)

C.D.C. No.

Medical Roster No.

Identification Marks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Result of the Medical Examination.

Signature or thumb Impression
of Seaman.

Official

Date:

Signature of the Medical Officer

Stamp.

Place:

[No. 139-M.S(1)/51]

H. C. SARIN, Dy. Secy.

